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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, before whom the morning stars first sang together, we praise Your holy Name. Replenish our Senators with new hope as they deal with the difficult issues of our time. Remind them that all things are possible to those who believe and that nothing can separate them from Your love. May they call to You for help, knowing that You will answer, inclining Your ear to hear their cry. Lord, give them the hearts and minds of servants who strive to please You. May the words they speak be an echo of Your voice as You help them to remember that no perplexity can successfully resist Your solutions.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable PATRICK J. LEAHY led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am so used to the President pro tempore allowing someone else to preside that I was speechless. I am very glad the President pro tempore is here. We have not seen him a lot, and it kind of keeps us on our toes. I am glad he is here.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a

period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and the Republicans controlling the second 30 minutes. The Senate will recess, as we always do, for our weekly caucus meetings today at 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. We expect that the Foreign Relations Committee will report out Senator KERRY's nomination to be Secretary of State, and I look forward to full Senate consideration of that very important nomination today.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 164

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told S. 164 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 164) to prohibit the United States from providing financial assistance to Pakistan until Dr. Shakil Afridi is freed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to this legislation at this time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today women make up nearly half of the American workforce. More women graduate from college today than do men, more women were sworn in to the 113th Congress than any Congress before that, and there are more women in the Democratic caucus than ever before—and that is an understatement. Millions of women in the United States are the primary wage earners for their families, and women are now free to fight for this county on the front lines of battle. Yet, for millions of American women, no amount of valor, talent, or

dedication will bring pay equality with their male peers. Women still bring home 77 cents for every \$1 their male colleagues earn for doing exactly the same work.

I have five children. My oldest child is a girl, my daughter Lana. I mean, it is hard to comprehend that she is worth less than one of my boys who does the same work. It is unfair. And that is true regardless of whether a woman has a college degree, regardless of what job she holds, and regardless of how many hours she spends at the office or factory each week. They get paid 77 cents on average for every \$1 a man makes.

Four years ago President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. I have gotten to know this dynamic, courageous woman, Lilly Ledbetter. She has campaigned around the country for people she likes and believe in her. I am so impressed with her and what she has been able to accomplish. This one woman has accomplished a great deal.

The Lilly Ledbetter legislation—the first bill President Obama signed as President of the United States—was the single greatest legislative step to ensure women have every chance to be full, equal participants in the workplace since the Equal Pay Act of 1963 was passed. But while this landmark legislation built on the legacy of the Equal Pay Act and narrowed the pay gap, it has not closed the pay gap, as I have just indicated. So the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI, introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act last Congress. The Paycheck Fairness Act is a logical extension of protections under the Equal Pay Act and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. It would help close the wage disparity by empowering women to negotiate for equal pay and creating strong incentives for employers to obey the laws already in place. It would give workers stronger tools to combat wage discrimination and bar retaliation against

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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